



1. **Summary:** The Cultural Heritage Center (“the Center”) in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) is pleased to announce the start of the 2024 grants cycle for the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP). The application process involves two rounds:
 - a. In Round 1, the Center will collect project ideas from eligible embassies in the form of concept notes, **due December 29, 2023**.
 - b. In Round 2, the Center will invite embassies with promising ideas to submit full project applications, due April 5, 2024.
 - c. Pending the availability of funds, awards will range from \$10,000 to \$500,000
 - d. Full implementation of the AFCP 2024 Grants Program is pending the availability of Fiscal Year 2024 funds.
2. **Funding Areas:** The AFCP Grants Program supports the preservation of archaeological sites, historic buildings and monuments, museum collections, and forms of traditional cultural expression, such as indigenous languages and crafts. Appropriate project activities may include:
 - a) Anastylis (reassembling a site from its original parts)
 - b) Conservation (addressing damage or deterioration to an object or site)
 - c) Consolidation (connecting or reconnecting elements of an object or site)
 - d) Documentation (recording in analog or digital format the condition and salient features of an object, site, or tradition)
 - e) Inventory (listing of objects, sites, or traditions by location, feature, age, or other unifying characteristic or state)
 - f) Preventive Conservation (addressing conditions that threaten or damage a site, object, collection, or tradition)
 - g) Restoration (replacing missing elements to recreate the original appearance of an object or site, usually appropriate only with fine arts, decorative arts, and historic buildings)
 - h) Stabilization (reducing the physical disturbance of an object or site)

3. Eligible Project Implementers: The Center defines eligible project implementers as reputable and accountable non-commercial entities that can demonstrate they have the requisite capacity to manage projects to preserve cultural heritage. Potential implementers must be registered and active in the U.S. government's System for Award Management (SAM) to receive U.S. federal assistance.

4. Round 1 Concept Note Requirements (Deadline: December 29, 2024):

Each concept note submitted must include:

- a) Project Basics, including working title, anticipated project length (Note: Applicants may propose project periods of up to 60 months), location/site, and project cost estimate (amount requested from AFPCP; in U.S. dollars).
- b) Project Implementer.
- c) Project Scope of Work summarizing (3,000 characters maximum):
 - Preservation activities and goals
 - Related host country or community goals (i.e., what they hope to gain from the project beyond preserving heritage and how these goals will be achieved)
 - Anticipated strategic outreach activities to build awareness and engage communities and stakeholders.
- d) Rational for AFPCP Support, explaining why it's in the interests of the U.S. government to fund the project, specifically:
 - How the project relates to specific National Security Strategy plans, Integrated Country Strategy goals, existing bilateral agreements (if applicable), or any other U.S. foreign objectives (1,000 characters maximum).
- e) Embassy ranking if submitting more than one concept note.
 - Embassy Front Office (FO) clearance.
 - Five (5) high quality digital images (JEPEGs) or audiovisual files that convey the nature and condition of the site, collection, or tradition and show the urgency or need for the proposed project (collapsing walls, water damage, etc.).

5. Round 2 Full Application Requirements (Deadline: April 15, 2024): The center will invite embassies selected in Round 1 to submit full applications by no later than Friday, April 15, 2024. The applications must fully satisfy the program objectives, funding areas and priorities, and eligibility requirements. Furthermore, to be considered complete, they must include:

From the implementer:

- a) Project Activities Description and Timeframe that present the project tasks in chronological order and list the major milestones with target dates for achieving them.
- b) Statement of Importance highlighting the historical, architectural, artistic, or cultural (non-religious) values of the cultural heritage.
- c) Proof of Official Permission to undertake the project from the office, agency, or organization that either owns or is otherwise responsible for the preservation and protection of the site or collection.
- d) Implementer Public Outreach Plan describing how the implementing partner will build awareness and engage communicates and stakeholders. Awareness-building activities typically include social media posts, ribbon cutting events, and new stories. Community and stakeholder engagement activities may include community-led or community-produced workshops, short videos, documentary films, oral histories, storytelling, or interpretive exhibits, and educational or enrichment events tailored for specific audiences, such as young people.
- e) Maintenance Plan outlining the steps or measures that will be taken to maintain the site, object, or collection in good condition after the AFCP-supported project is complete; or, in the case of forms of traditional cultural expression, to preserve and disseminate the documentation, knowledge, or skills gained from the project.
- f) Data and Media Access Plan outlining how the implementing partner will share, as appropriate, data and media generated from the project with the public and Department of State.
- g) If applicable, explain how the proposed project or project staff are linked to other Department of State cultural, educational, or other exchange programs.
- h) Resumes or CVs of the proposed project director and key project participants.
- i) Detailed Project Budget, demarcated in one-year budget periods (2024, 2025, 2026 etc.), that lists all costs in separate categories (Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel [including Per Diem], Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Other Direct Costs, Indirect Costs); indicates funds from other sources; and gives a justification for any anticipated international travel costs; (Note: You may use optional AFCP budget template available via GO Browser and GO Virtual at <http://usdos.sharepoint.com/sites/ECA-Home/Policy/CHC/AFCP> [click on AFCP Application Resources]).

- j) Budget Narrative explaining how the costs were estimated (quantity x unit cost, annual salary x percentage of time spent on project, etc.) and any large budget line items.
- k) Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), including Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A), Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B), and, if applicable, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL).
- l) Relevant Supporting Documentation, such as historic structure reports, restoration plans and studies, conservation needs assessments and recommendations, architectural and engineering records, etc., compiled in preparation for the proposed project.
- m) As requested by the Center or as appropriate, additional high-quality digital images (JPEGs) or audiovisual files that convey the nature and condition of the heritage and show the urgency or need for the proposed project (collapsing walls, extensive water damage, etc.).

6. Cost Sharing and Other Forms of Cost Participation: There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost participation required. When an implementing partner offers cost sharing, it is understood and agreed that the partner must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the budget of the application and later included in an approved agreement. The implementing partner will be responsible for tracking and reporting on any cost share or outside funding, which is subject to audit per 2 CFR 200. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs.

7. Ineligible Activities and Unallowable Costs: AFCP does not support the following activities or costs, and the Center will deem applications requesting AFCP support for any of these activities or costs ineligible:

- a) Preservation or purchase of privately or commercially owned cultural objects, collections, or real property, including those whose transfer from private or commercial to public ownership is envisioned, planned, or in process but not complete at the time of application.
- b) Preservation of natural heritage (physical, biological, and geological formations, paleontological collections, habitats of threatened species off animals and plants, fossils, etc.) unless the natural heritage has a cultural heritage connection or dimension.
- c) Preservation of hominid or human remains.
- d) Preservation of news media (newspaper, newsreels, radio, and TV programs, etc.).
- e) Preservation of published materials available elsewhere (books, periodicals, etc.).

- f) Development of curricula or educational materials for classroom use.
- g) Archaeological excavations or exploratory surveys for research purposes.
- h) Historical research, except in cases where the research is justifiable and integral to the success of proposed project
- i) Acquisition or creation of new exhibits, objects, or collections for new or existing museums.
- J) Construction of new buildings, building additions, or permanent coverings (over archaeological sites, for example).
- k) Commissions of new works of art or architecture for commemorative or economic development purposes.
- l) Creation of new or modern adaption of existing traditional dances, songs, changes, musical compositions, plays, or other performances.
- m) Creation of replicas or conjectural reconstructions of cultural objects or sites that no longer exist.
- n) Relocation of cultural sites from one physical location to another.
- o) Removal of cultural objects or elements of cultural sites from the country for any reason.
- p) Digitization of cultural objects or collections, unless part of a larger, clearly defined conservation, documentation, or public diplomacy effort.
- q) Conservation plans or other studies, unless they are one component of the larger project to implement the results of those studies.
- r) Cash reserves, endowments, or revolving funds (funds must be expended within the award period [up to five years] and may not be used to create an endowment or revolving fund).
- s) Costs of fund-raising campaigns.
- t) Contingency, unforeseen, or miscellaneous costs or fees.
- u) Costs of work performed prior to announcement of the award unless allowable per 2 CFR 200.458 and approved by the Grants Officer.
- v) International travel, except in cases where travel is justifiable and integral to the success of the proposed project or to provide project leaders with learning and exchange opportunities with cultural heritage experts.
- w) Individual projects costing less than US\$10,000 or more than \$500,000.
- x) Independent U.S. projects overseas.

8. Application Review Process: The Center will begin its formal review of concept notes in early 2024. It will review and select Round 1 project concept notes and full project applications (Round 2) in consultation with the regional bureau PD offices and taking into consideration the program objectives, funding areas and priorities, and other application requirements. The Center may deem concept notes and full applications ineligible if they do not fully adhere to

AFCP 2024 Grants Program objectives, requirements, and other criteria stated herein.

- a) Concept note review and selection (Round 1): In consultation with the regional bureaus, ECA and the Center will determine which project ideas advance to the Round 2 application stage based on embassy and implementer responses to the Round 1 Concept Note requirements (para 11 above).
- b) Regional bureau input will include guidance to ECA and the Center on how it prioritizes and ranks proposed projects from the countries in its region. The Center may forward concept notes to other State Department or federal agency personnel with relevant experience for advisory peer review. The Center may identify specific project as candidates for additional or enhanced project design. In the spring of 2024, the Center will notify embassies of the Round 1 results and invite a subset to submit full project proposals to Round 2.
- c) Full application review and selection (Round 2): The Center will review and rate the full project applications to confirm the technical feasibility of the projects, ensure outlined activities and budget lines support stated goals, and identify any remaining shortcomings, questions, or concerns. The Center will then convene a review panel to recommend applications for funding.
- d) Full application rating schema: The Center will rate full applications using the following point-based system:
 - Clarity and completeness of Activities Description and Timeframe (20 points max)
 - Importance (10 points max)
 - Clarity and completeness of Implementer Public Outreach Plan (15 points max)
 - Project Maintenance Plan (15 points max)
 - Budget and Budget Narrative (20 points max)
 - Supporting Materials (resumes, assessments, reports, images, etc.) (10 points max)
 - Innovative integration, collaboration, or coordination with other ECA and public diplomacy programs (5 bonus max)

9. Award Announcement: ECA will announce the results of the AFCP 2024 Grants Program when application review and selection are complete and the Department's FY 2024 funding levels are established. Annual program results are typically announced in July 2024.

10. Performance and Deliverables: AFCP 2024 award recipients must submit performance progress reports, federal financial status reports, and final reports on time as specified in the Notice of Award. In cases where the proposed public diplomacy or other expected impacts may not be fully realized at the immediate conclusion of the project, the Center may request continued voluntary reporting on specific topics. The Center may compile this information into reports to Congress and other documents.

11. SAM Registration: An implementing partner must be registered in the U.S. government's System for Award Management (SAM) prior to receiving U.S. federal assistance unless they meet one of the exemptions specified in the Federal Assistance Directive (<https://usdos.sharepoint.com/sites/A-OPE/FA/SitePages/Policy.aspx>). The SAM registration process can take weeks or months, especially for non-U.S. applicants. SAM will assign a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) automatically to any entity registering or renewing its record in the system. Registration in SAM is free: <https://sam.gov/>.

12. Disclaimer: Notification of this funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the AFCP program or the U.S. government. The Center reserves the right to program formalities and to reduce, revise, or increase project scopes and budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

13. Embassy Contact: Please direct inquiries to U.S. Embassy Addis Ababa, Ryan Bradeen at bradeenrg@state.gov or Gedion Mamo at mamog@state.gov.